4: Cross L-5 (no date) 1948 E16 Slavs E16

178 contemporary material and intellectual culture which culmi-
439 nates in their conversion to Christianity under Roman or Byzantine auspices. It likewise witnessed an expansion of trade both in Central Europe and in the Orient, and in this commercial expansion the Slavs in general had a definite stake.

764 Though a combined evaluation of linguistic, source, and archaeological data permits a tolerably accurate and convincing appraisal of the material culture of the Slavs during the pagan period, there is no such coherent mass of evidence upon which any wholly satisfactory statement of their religious beliefs, demonology, and eschatology may be predicted. The early Slavs cremated their dead, sharing this custom with their other Indo-European neighbors (Lithuanians, Germans, Celts). Burial was adopted through foreign influence, and before the
774 various conversions both customs existed side by side. The
776 primitive pagan Slavs were animists and attributed a soul to
775 the natural elements in which they lived. They honored a supreme deity and also believed in the existence of wood, water,
● [782] and household spirits to which they offered sacrifices. Beside these nature spirits, they also honored the spirits of their ancestors and thus believed in a future life. They deified the
821 heavenly bodies and the great phenomena of nature (thunder, lightning, wind, rain, fire).

776 Beside these animistic and manistic beliefs, the pagan Slavs also venerated a limited number of gods, some of which were of alien origin. The organization of a veritable pantheon was carried farthest by the Western Slavs who lived along the Baltic coast, a phenomenon perhaps not unconnected with Germanic influences of early date. It is reasonably clear that all the primitive Slavs possessed a god of the thunder and lightning, though this deity, Perun, took on special importance among the Russian Slavs because of special Scandinavian influences and the importance of Thor in the Scandinavian pantheon. Among the Western Slavs, however, Perun was less dominant than the god of the shining sun, Svarog, a name apparently connected with the indo-European base **svar*, signifying "heat,

[THE PERIOD FROM 700 to 1000 A.D. -- ANALYST]

10: French S-4 (no date) 1951 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

796 emphasis, in dramatic stress. Thus in the West everything plainly leads up to the Consecration as the climax of the rite not only in its inner meaning but in its outward aspect. In the Orthodox Liturgy, however, the Consecration might even escape the notice of one who was not accustomed to follow the rite or attentive to note it. The Consecration is, of course, actually its climax in East and West alike, but in the East no special outward signs of it are visible to the congregation, the Royal doors which shut off the Sanctuary being closed.

On the other hand the Great Entrance is easily the most conspicuous part of the whole service. It corresponds to the offertory in the West, i.e., the bringing of the bread and wine to be offered at the altar. In the West this is the simplest of actions[1] and involves no more than moving the bread and wine a few feet from a small table called the Credence, to the Altar. In the East it is the occasion of a solemn procession in which all the clergy present and their attendants pass out through the northern door of the iconostas, along the front of it, and after a pause for biddings to prayer, in again through the Royal doors. All this is done with pomp and circumstance, the choir meanwhile singing the Cherubic hymn.

The deportment of the worshippers is to be noted. They take little audible part in the service—there are no hymns in the Western sense—but they often join in the Lord's Prayer aloud and sometimes in the Creed. They cross themselves [782] frequently (making the sign from right to left) and kneel or even prostrate themselves as devotion moves them. There is much freedom and spontaneity of action. Men, women and children are all gathered together in the nave, occupying any particular part in it which takes their fancy. They move about from one place to another if they are so disposed and go up to salute an icon or place a lighted candle whenever they are moved to do so. It is quite unlike an English congregation, in which all do the same thing at the same time. The Orthodox habit is more free and easy. But at the same time it is less so, for the Orthodox stands to worship, and this not simply in the sense of not sitting or not kneeling. It is more like standing

[1] But compare the Offertory as performed in Westminster Abbey and some other Anglican churches.

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the fact that the rules left room for the expression of individual inspiration and the exercise of creative power, as the painter set about his task of adorning a given surface with a vision of divine truth.

As the icons vary in their subject matter, so they vary also in their artistic merit. Some are supreme works of art, many are of great beauty, superb in their composition, rhythm of line and glowing colour. Many others have little aesthetic value, and the icon may even degenerate into a cheap oleograph stuck on a piece of wood.

But the veneration in which they are held is independent of these considerations. Some measure of it may be found in the ubiquity of icons in an Orthodox country. They are not only in churches, but also in public buildings of all kinds, in private houses and shops. There is a recognized position for the icon in a room, and the visitor will salute it on entering, just as he greets his host. Schools, regiments, clubs and the like will adopt their own icons. The devout will carry an icon with them when they travel, and have it before them when they say their prayers. Well-to-do people may accumulate their family icons from generation to generation. The first thing the Orthodox worshipper does on entering his church is to salute the icons, or, at least, such of them as may claim his particular devotion. He bows before them, crosses himself, says a prayer, kisses the icon, and perhaps sets a lighted candle before it in the stand provided for the purpose. He then moves away to wherever he wishes to stand for the service if there is one, or to leave the church and go about his business.

Plainly we are here in a realm which readily lends itself to capture by popular religion. Popular religion, whatever the field in which it expresses itself, the use of the Bible, the singing of subjective and emotional hymns, the veneration of icons, or anything else, may easily use the thing it has captured, in a way which others call superstition, and which may indeed be such.

But before the Westerner draws hasty general conclusions about the Orthodox practice before the icons, he should reflect that the Orthodox approaches the icon with premises in his mind which he himself probably does not share.

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
EF6 Serbs
Slavic Peoples E 16

III

ELEMENTS OF A FOLK-CHRISTIANITY AND ITS RELATION TO MAGIC

Procopius in describing the manners of the Slavs has a 771
remark to this effect; that while they believed in a supreme God and in many spirits and demons and lesser gods, they neither believed in any fate, nor in any direct influences over human life of a supernatural nature. What the writer meant to convey by this extraordinary statement is not known, unless that at that time the ideas of predestination, the cult of fates, who regularly preside over births, and that of the ancestors, for whose service the most characteristic ceremonies of the peasant are designed, were not in evidence; or that in general the religious attitude of these barbarians differed essentially from that of the Greeks. Procopius goes on to say that, when a man felt himself to 174
be in particular danger, through sickness or through war, he [782]
promised gifts to the gods, and, if the situation were grave he made these in fact, hoping therewith to redeem his life. This is still a fundamental element of popular prophylaxis. Apart from such literary curiosities, the early religion of the South Slavs can only be reconstructed from later evidence, from recent folk-lore, and, in this case, not very helpful archaeological study.

For the more northern branches of the Slavic race, there 771
is ample evidence of a pagan priesthood, of a shamanistic 175
type, and of an organised cult, with a foundation of animistic magic, an established ritual, calendar and shrines. There is no conclusive record of anything approaching such a highly organised system amongst the South Slavs, and the traces of idol worship have received no concrete archaeological confirmation up to date. The fuller accounts of Helmoldus amongst the West Slavs, and of Nestor amongst the Russians,

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5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
EF6 Serbs
Great Russians RF2
Historical Bulgaria EE2
Historical Yugoslavia EF2
Slavic Peoples E6

lot). The sacred oak tree is mentioned by several early chroniclers. Now while the cult of vegetation, water spirits, and to some lesser extent of stones, in the Balkans at any rate, retains most of its primal character and importance, so that the sacrificing to trees, or on trees, for instance, can be found almost exactly as described by Herbord among the West Slavs and by Ibn Rosteh in Russia, that of patron deities, of an ancient Slavonic pantheon, does not remain at all. Not a single name of a Slavonic god has been recorded here beyond doubt; not a single image recovered.

Taking all the evidence together, it is not impossible to conclude that the complex pantheism of the other Slavs which required an established priesthood, was not typical of the religion of the Southern Slavs; whereas in the north and west the priestly cult overshadowed older popular forms. Even there the cult of the sacred tree is spoken of as an ancient custom of the people, not one of the ministrations of the priests. The priests themselves delivered oracles as well as read omens; and besides carrying out performances within the shrine to which the populace was not admitted, or at which it assisted only as an audience, they took upon themselves to impersonate gods in order to mislead the ignorant. Literary sources in the Balkans have plentiful references to 'magicians', etc., but those to priests occur mainly in conventional accounts of paganism, except in the accounts of the Bulgars during the Asperuh period.

The two chief offices of priesthood were sacrifice and divining, which could, in the north, elevate the priest to the position of tribal leader. For the Balkans we are told that the reading of omens accompanied blood sacrifice.

The priests of the East and West Slavs were a caste apart, specially endowed and specially venerated. In the long list of terms connected with priestcraft and sorcery in early monuments, and in the vocabularies of modern languages, the titles of various kinds of priest and magician and

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
EF6 Serbs EF6
Slovic Peoples E16

the sacra of the cult, especially the products of sacrificial offering, and, as to-day, a number of those material objects which, in the reverence of the simple person towards all that serves him, acquires a force and quasi-sacred symbolism. All things and organisms are treated with respect, and it is not so much that certain of them are picked out for veneration or as the objects of cult-worship, as that the common outlook on dynamic nature gives an individual character and hence a recognised function to each species.

The veneration of the oak tree does not save it from fire; that of the cherry tree makes it a sin to burn its wood or even to cut its branches: the yew is powerful, and may not be burned, but it can be hewn and carved and made into useful objects, dishes, handles, ploughs, boxes, spindles, trays, as well as crosses and amulets, which are then particularly safe or lucky. The blackthorn is used for magical purposes, such as impaling a vampire; it is recommended to use it in making wooden implements for the sake of its magical properties, but the tree itself can be regarded almost with dread, and may not be injured or cut down or uprooted. Nearly everywhere the grafting of fruit-tree slips on wild trees, particularly on wild pears and cherries, is thought to be a virtuous act, amounting to a form of charity. I have heard of a peasant doing so as an act of expiation, a desire to obtain merit (*zadužbina*), in a district which knows little nowadays of particular tree cults. Where a ritual-agricultural calendar is followed in the traditional manner, all grafting is reserved for special days, sometimes with a special local etiology. Individuals sometimes mark the birth of a child or an animal by fertilising a tree in this way.[1] Further, I have seen over and over again in remote and isolated places, that a wild tree has been ennobled, apparently for no sound economic purpose. While I know that almost a sentimental element is

[1] At Rakljansko Polje a pine tree was said to have sprung from a branch stuck in the ground by the Empress Milica when Car Lazar was born. Cf. J. Pančić, *Iz Prirode*, p. 52. Similar acts of commemoration are, of course, well known in other parts of the world.

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
EF6 Serbs EF6
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SP 515 [177] Roman bath entirely disappears from the North Balkans, although public baths were known to the Avars also. At the present time, the Turkish bath is restricted to a specific cultural region, where a recent Asiatic influence has been concentrated. As it now retreats this excellent institution also falls into decay. But the bath and the use of steam for S [515] sweating, now universal amongst the South Slavs, rubbing [752] and massage, more or less symbolical washing and bathing, and the manipulation of broken limbs and the dressing of wounds, are to be reckoned amongst the oldest of their practices. Archaeological finds witness to healed wounds and S A [752] fractures, but we know nothing of prehistoric trepanation amongst the South Slavs—the only European race, with the Albanians and some Caucasians, which continued the practice almost within living memory.

SP 755 782 Offerings and vows, ritual performances and acts connected with fertility cults, were the basis of mystical healing. Hydrotherapy includes also the worship of water spirits, and, amongst Lithuanians, of a personified watery element. Niederle adds to this list of reconstructed primitive medicine the use of oils or unguents which preserved strength and health,[1] and a number of Eastern aromatics, known in primitive times.

S SP 177 773 789 [372] Plants introduced in historical times have added to the botanical mythology, and enjoy a symbolism of their own; just as field-glasses, pipe-lighters, petroleum, trains, firearms and other more recent gifts of material civilisation, receive their part in contemporary folk-lore, whose incorporating activity is only now beginning to decline, and in some cases, a magico-religious part. Firearms have developed a complete legend of their own; pipe-lighters are sometimes used for producing ritual fire, though matches are universally disqualified; and so on.

S 241 824 778 Wheat, which in the Middle Ages was cultivated only in a very limited area, and, in the early nineteenth century, was still little used in the interior of Serbia, has a universal ritual

[1] Cf. L. Niederle, *Slovenské Starožitnosti*, I, p. 127.